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This Report is Dedicated to Jerome Cutone, Citizen

Jerome Cutone has been the conscience of Essex for at least 60 years. He has been active in town politics for many, many years. Whether as a member of the Board of Finance for two terms, or as a Selectman, or as an attendee of town meetings as well as commissions and board meetings, Jerome has often been heard. Long an advocate of increased participation in local government, he has voiced the need to make the efforts to involve more citizens in the process of running our town. Distressed with the low turn out at most town meetings, he has pressed referendums as a mechanism to bring a larger number of voters to speak on issues. As champion of the less favored, he has never let any of us forget that Essex is a diverse community which cannot, must not, slight those who through age or circumstance have fewer resources.

Jerome was born in Centerbrook some 85 or so years ago. He attended Centerbrook Elementary School (now the VFW) and graduated from Pratt High School (now the Town Hall). He served in World War II in the drive across France and Belgium in 1944. He was wounded in action near Stolberg, Germany and was awarded the Purple Heart

Jerome was a brick and stone mason for many years. He has been married to the former Jennie Bombaci for over 50 years. They reside in a house on Westbrook Road which Jerome built with assistance from his friends. Jerome is still an active walker and gardene

GOVERNMENT:

Board of Selectmen..Three member Board with minority representation.

Board of Finance.....Six member Board with minority representation.

Town Meeting.....Legislative branch of Essex local government.

LOCATION:

Middlesex County....Located on the CT River. Three villages: Centerbrook, Essex and Ivoryton. Bounded on the north by Deep River, on the west by Westbrook and on the south by Old Saybrook.

Longitude: 72 20W

Latitude: +41 20N, 12.2 Square miles

POPULATION...Approx. 6,500

TAXES.....All assessments based on 70% of value. Mill rate 14.9

SERVICES:

Police Protection.....Res. Trooper, Officers

Fire Protection.....Vol. Fire Department

Civil Preparedness.....Part-time Coord.

Ambulance.....Essex Ambulance

HOSPITALS:

Yale New Haven, New Haven

Middlesex Hospital, Middletown

Lawrence Memorial, New London

Middlesex Hospital–Shoreline Med. Ctr. (Open 24 Hours)

All located in a 30 mile radius of Essex.

NEWSPAPERS SERVING THE AREA:

Hartford Courant

Main Street News

Middletown Press

New Haven Register

New London Day

Pictorial Gazette

Valley Courier

WEBSITE: essexct.gov

History of Essex

The Town of Essex has a rich background, dating from the mid-17th century. Lt. William Pratt, William Hyde, and John Lay were the three original settlers of Potapoug Point, an area that approximately encompassed current Essex Village. Most of Essex (as well as Deep River and Chester) was initially known as the Potapoug Quarter of the Saybrook Colony. In 1852, Essex became a separate town, although combined with current Old Saybrook. Indeed, it was called Old Saybrook from 1852 to 1854, when on May 9th of that year the State Legislature voted to further divide the town, establishing the towns of Essex and Old Saybrook. In 1859, the Centerbrook (Ivoryton) section of Saybrook was added to Essex.

The initial gristmill dam in town was built at the mouth of the Falls River by Samuel Hough in 1689, and was followed 10 years later by another dam in Centerbrook, at the point of the greatest “drop” in that stream. This dam powered not only a gristmill, but also a sawmill and iron works. This established Center Saybrooke (Centerbrook) as the focal point of the three-town area. The emphasis was on agriculture and the rich soil of the “Scotch Plains” (along Route #153) fitted perfectly. In 1722, the Colonial Court allowed the creation of the 2nd Ecclesiastical Society, in effect formally establishing Essex as a town. The Congregational Church in Centerbrook, built in 1790, is the oldest standing church in Middlesex County and a visual reminder of the founding of our town.

The Essex Village section of town grew in importance with the advent of shipping and shipbuilding. Although a wharf had been in operation at the riverfront as early as 1664, it was not until the latter part of the 18th century that Essex emerged as a place of maritime significance. The construction in 1775/1776 of the “Oliver Cromwell,” Connecticut’s first “battleship,” by Captain Uriah Hayden set the tone for future events. Between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, more than 600 wooden sailing vessels were built in Essex (including Deep River Village). The British raid on the harbor on April 8, 1814, is testament to the maritime importance of our area. They destroyed 28 vessels, including five built as privateers. It was one of the worst losses the American side suffered during the War of 1812. The coming of the steamboats locally in 1823, when they first stopped in town, may have initially seemed a blessing, but in the long run the steamship symbolized a great change in ship construction and the way people traveled.

The handmade wooden sailing ships fell victim to the progress of the Industrial Revolution, and the village of Ivoryton became the economic center of Essex. Samuel M. Comstock firmly established the ivory industry in that section of town and by 1862, in partnership with George A. Cheney, had formed Comstock, Cheney & Co. This factory dominated local life for almost 100 years, manufacturing piano actions and keyboards, as well as other ivory artifacts. Ivoryton was not named as such until the 1880s, having been known as West Centerbrook up to that time. During World War II, this company (then called Pratt, Read & Co.) employed thousands, producing gliders for the U. S. government.

Since that time, Essex has changed dramatically. The advent of the interstate highway system and the growth of pleasure boating have made Essex a destination point, both for travel and residency. The large factories are gone and shipbuilding is only a note in the history books, but the town has taken on a new focus. It is largely residential, and many retail operations have opened in Centerbrook, where the center of town was 300 years ago. Overall, these must be improvements, for in the middle part of the last decade, we became “The Best Small Town in America,” according to one book. Essex carries its past very well. Many old houses have been restored, the old roads are still intact, and most importantly, residents are aware and respectful of what Essex once was. It is a town of three villages, of which we can be both currently and historically proud.

Don Malcarne, Town Historian

Republican Town Committee

Sue Beckman

Ken Bombaci

Herb Clark
Alexander Daddona
Lynn Faulstick
Phil Haynes
David Houghton
Joel Marzi
George Mayer
Neil Nichols
Winifred Olson
Ann Pritchard
Betty Schellens
Terry Stewart
Ken Wexler

Judith Clark
Paul Dubey
Mike Hammond
Jim Hill
Ken Kells
Margaret O'Connell
Andy Morris
Sue Nilson
Vincent Pacileo
Richard Rybak
Marshal Schofield
Mike Terry
Virginia Williams

Democratic Town Committee

Josephine Bombaci
Jim Carey
Bill Doane
Lois Ely
Earl Fowler
W. Campbell Hudson
Jane James
Phil Miller
Christopher Riley
Lee Rowley
Lon Seidman
James Spallone
Kay Tucker
Alvin G. Wolfgram

Joseph Bombaci
Matt Cooper
Carl Ellison
Seth Fidel
Jim Francis
Ray James
Jonathan James
Norman Needleman
Dennis Robida
MaryAnn Rowley
Stanley Sheppard
John Stannard
Fred Vollono

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE – ESSEX

Virginia C. Cook	767-1096
Charles N. Doane III	767-1562
Paul B. Dubey	767-1833
William K. Duch	767-1861
Linda K. Dwyer	767-8381
Earl J. Fowler	767-2674
David W. Galligan	767-1860
JoAnn Greenwood	767-0019
Jean R. Hanor	767-1962
Carl S. Kaufmann	767-0296
Jack Lazare	767-2880
Philip J. Miller	767-7837
Douglas W. Paul	767-3094
Peter E. Pool	767-1970
Richard E. Rieder	767-2912
Albert N. Rogin	767-0702
Lee A. Rowley	767-7210
Raymond A. Rubenbauer	767-2514
Linda R. Savitsky	767-3076
Elizabeth G. Schellens	767-8075
Dorothy M. Shugrue	767-7642
Kathleen McKinney Tucker	767-0397
William P. Veillette	767-8519
Kenneth A. Wexler	767-3388
Gary J. Weymer	767-0476

Officials, Federal

President George W. Bush, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, DC 20500, (202) 456-1414,
www.whitehouse.gov/ president@whitehouse.gov

Congressman Rob Simmons, 2 Courthouse Square, 5th Floor, Norwich, CT 06360, (860) 886-0139 Ext.
511, 215 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, (202) 225-2076

Senator Christopher Dodd, 100 Great Meadow Road, Wethersfield, CT, 06109, (860) 258-6940, 800-334-
5341, www.senate.gov/-dodd/
senator@dodd.senate.gov

Senator Joseph Lieberman, 1 Constitution Plaza, 7th Floor, Hartford, CT, 06103, (860) 549-8463, 706 Hart
Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, 800-225-5605, www.senate.gov/-lieberman
senator@lieberman.senate.gov

State Officials

Governor M. Jodi Rell, 210 Capitol Ave. Rm. 200, Hartford, CT 06106, (860) 566-4840, 800-406-1527,
email: governor.rell@po.state.ct.us, <http://www.ct.gov/>

Lt. Governor Kevin B. Sullivan, State Capital Rm. 304, Hartford, CT 06106, www.ct.gov/lrgovksullivan

Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz, State Capital Suite 104, Hartford, CT 06106, (860) 509-6000,
www.sots.state.ct.us/

State Treasurer Denise Nappier, 55 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106, (860) 702-3000 www.state.ct.us/ott/

Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, 55 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106, P.O. Box 120, Hartford,
Connecticut 06141-0120
(860)860-808-5318, email: attorney.general@po.state.ct.us, www.cslib.org/attygenl/

State Comptroller Nancy Wyman, 55 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106, (860) 702-3300 ,
www.osc.state.ct.us

State Senator Eileen M. Daily (*33rd District*), 103 ColdSpring Dr., Westbrook, CT 06498, (860) 399-
7342; Legislative Office Building,
Rm. 2100, Hartford, CT 06106 800-842-1420, www.senatedems.state.ct.us/daily *State Representative 36th*
District

State Representative James F. Spallone (*35th District*), P.O. Box 408 Essex, CT 06426, (860) 767-8615;
Legislative Office Building
Rm. 4016, Hartford, CT 06106 1591, 800-842-8267, (860) 240-8585, www.cga.state.ct.us/hdo

Town Directory

Essex Town Hall 860-767-4340, Hours: Mon - Fri 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Landfill & Recycling Center 767-1926 Mon., Thurs.-Sat. 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Police or Fire Emergency 911, Resident Trooper 767-1054

First Selectman's Office	Phil Miller Ext. 114 pmiller@essexct.gov Cindy Varricchio Ext. 112 cvarricchio@essexct.gov
Zoning Enforcement	Marian Staye Ext. 115 mstaye@essexct.gov Dottie Zeitelhack Ext. 116
Tax Collector	Nancy Stadalnick Ext. 120

	nstadalnick@essexct.gov
Treasurer's Office	<p>pmaclean@essexct.gov Robert Dixon Ext. 127 rdixon@essexct.gov Jeanine Fazzino Ext. 122 jfazzino@essexct.gov</p>
Health & Sanitation	<p>Carol Speer Ext. 118 cspeer@essexct.gov</p>
Town Clerk	<p>Frances D. Nolin Ext. 129 fnolin@essexct.gov Fax: 767-4560</p>
Assessor	<p>Jessica Graves Ext. 124 jgraves@essexct.gov</p>
Acting Building Official & Fire Marshal	<p>Betty Bevan Ext. 123 Keith Nolin Ext. 117 knolin@essexct.gov Cheryl Haase Ext. 119 chaase@essexct.gov</p>
Probate Judge	<p>Deborah Pearl Ext. 126 dpearl@essexct.gov Valerie Shickel Ext. 125 vshickel@essexct.gov</p>
Registrars of Voters Custodian	<p>sbeaudoin@essexct.gov Ext. 142 Earle Harrington Ext. 136 eharrington@essexct.gov</p>
Highway/Public Works	<p>Dave Caroline 767-0715 dcaroline@essexct.gov</p>
Landfill	<p>767-1926</p>

Post Offices

Essex Post Office 767-8476

Mon. - Fri. - Lobby: 6 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Window: 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday - Lobby: 6 a.m. - 3 p.m., Window: 8:30 a.m. - Noon

Centerbrook Post Office 767-8730

Mon. - Fri. - Lobby: 7:30 a.m. - 1 p.m./2:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Window: 7:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m./2:30 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday - Lobby: 7:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Window: 8:00 a.m. - Noon

Ivoryton Post Office 767-8515

Mon. - Fri. - Lobby: 6:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Window: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday - Lobby: 6:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Window: 8 a.m. - Noon

Essex Elementary School School Hours:

Kindergarten Morning Session 8:25 a.m. – 11:12 a.m.

Kindergarten Afternoon Session 12:12 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Grades 1-6 8:25 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., School Office (Mon. – Fri.) 7:45 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. School Playground is supervised during lunch recesses.

Emergency Closing of School: In the event of severe or unusual weather conditions, the Superintendent of Schools will contact radio stations WTIC, WLIS, WCNX and WDRC, as well as television stations WFSB, WTNH and WVIT.

Libraries

Essex Library 767-1560

Monday Closed

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Friday, Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Summer
Closes Saturday at 1 p.m. – Closed Sunday

Ivoryton Library 767-1252
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Wednesday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Friday 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Sunday 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Town Meeting Minutes.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING AUGUST 7, 2003

First Selectman Kenneth A. Wexler called the Town Meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. Donald Malcarne was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk, Frances L. Darcy, read the call of the meeting. There were approximately eight (8) people in attendance.

The following resolutions were Read, Seconded and VOTED:

RESOLVED: To authorize the First Selectman, on behalf of the Town of Essex, to enter into a contract with the Elgin Sweeper Company to lease-purchase (1) Elgin Pelican Street Sweeper for a lease term of thirty-six (36) months at a total equipment cost of \$121,843.00, less a \$7,000.00 trade-in allowance. The remaining balance of \$114,843.00 would be payable in three (3) equal annual installments of \$39,698.60. Said payment includes financing charges at the rate of three and seventy-five hundredths (3.75%) percent per annum. A copy of the contract is on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

RESOLVED: To authorize the First Selectman on behalf of the Town of Essex to acquire a 2004 Ford Crown Victoria at a cost of \$28,456.00, of which Eighty (80%) Percent (\$22,765.00) will be reimbursed by the State of Connecticut upon the submission of the appropriate invoices. The remaining balance shall be taken from the Cruiser Sinking Fund Account as approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To authorize the First Selectman on behalf of the Town of Essex to enter into a contract and to execute such other documents necessary to conclude a transaction with Essex Auto Salvage, Inc. for the swap of land on Dump Road, consisting of 2,350 square feet to be conveyed to the Town and 2,307 square feet to be conveyed to Essex Auto Salvage, Inc. Said conveyances by or to the Town may be of the fee or by easement, as the Board of Selectmen shall determine. No monetary consideration shall be paid by either party. The specific location of said parcels is shown on a map prepared by Doane-Collins Engineering dated June 26, 2003, a copy of which is on file in the Essex Town Clerk's Office.

Meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances L. Darcy, Town Clerk

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Meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances L. Darcy, Town Clerk

RESOLVED: To transfer \$21,228 into the Town Clerk's account. Said sum to be taken from the Undesignated Fund Balance as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To transfer \$24,162 into the Treasurer's account. Said sum to be taken from the Undesignated Fund Balance as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To transfer \$25,070 into the Interest Payments account. Said sum to be taken from the Undesignated Fund Balance as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of Nancy Arnold and Kathleen Tucker as members to the Conservation Commission. Terms to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve the appointment by the First Selectman of Robert Shickel as a member to the Inlands Wetlands and Water Courses Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve the appointment by the First Selectman of Susan Uihlein as a member to the Inlands Wetlands and Water Courses Commission representing the Zoning Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of Russell Smith as a member to the Planning Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the First Selectman of Carla Feroni as an alternate member to the Planning Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Carla Feroni as a member to the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2005.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Lon Seidman and Lee Thompson as members to the Economic Development Commission. Terms to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2005.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of John Senning and Walter Schieferdecker as members to the Harbor Management Commission. Terms to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Donald Mesite as a member to the Park & Recreation Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Burgess Russell as a member to the Park and Recreation Commission. Term to run from date of this meeting to December 1, 2005.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Jennifer Crown as an alternate member to the Park & Recreation Commission. Term to run from date of this meeting to December 1, 2004.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Cecilia Freundlich as an alternate member to the Park and Recreation Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Henry May and Robert Potts as members to the Sanitary Waste Disposal Commission. Terms to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2005.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Randal Osborne as an alternate member to the Sanitary Waste Disposal Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2005.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Alexander Daddona as a member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Seth Fidel as an alternate member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from date of this meeting to December 1, 2004.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Lynn Faulstick as an alternate member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Joel Marzi as a member to the Zoning Commission. Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of David King as a member to the Zoning Commission.

Term to run from December 1, 2003 to December 1, 2006.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances L. Darcy, Town Clerk

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING DECEMBER 15, 2003

First Selectman Philip J. Miller called the Town Meeting to order at 8:01 p.m. Donald Malcarne was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk, Frances L. Darcy, read the call of the meeting. There were fourteen (14) people in attendance.

RESOLVED: To approve the Statement of Town accounts, report of the Town Treasurer and the report of the Superintendent of Schools, as printed in the 2002-2003 Annual Town Report.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Mark Uihlein as a member to the Economic Development Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 1, 2005.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Norman Needleman as a member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from date of this meeting to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Stanley Sheppard as an alternate member to the Zoning Commission. Term to run from date of this meeting to December 1, 2005.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances L. Darcy, Town Clerk

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING JANUARY 21, 2004

First Selectman, Philip J. Miller, called the Town Meeting to order at 6:52 p.m. Donald Malcarne was elected Moderator. The call of the meeting was read by the Town Clerk, Frances L. Darcy. There were approximately nine (9) people in attendance.

The following resolutions were Read, Seconded and VOTED:

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of John Beveridge as the Planning Commission representative to the Economic Development Commission. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 1, 2005.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Joseph Zaraschi as a member to the Harbor Management Commission. Term to run from date of this meeting to December 1, 2004.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances L. Darcy, Town Clerk

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MARCH 11, 2004

First Selectman Philip J. Miller called the Town Meeting to order at 8:03 p.m. Donald Malcarne was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk, Frances L. Darcy, read the call of the meeting. There were approximately thirty-four people in attendance.

The following resolutions were Read, Seconded and VOTED:

RESOLVED: To transfer \$37,000 into the Essex Elementary School Building Account. Said sum to be taken from the undesignated fund balance as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

Jerome Cutone asked that the Resolution be changed to read, "not to exceed \$37,000". After much discussion Campbell Hudson made a motion to amend the Resolution, the amendment was seconded; question was moved to read as follows.

RESOLVED: The transfer of funds into the Essex Elementary School Building Account not to exceed \$37,000 said sum to be taken from the undesignated fund balance as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Seth Fidel as a member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 1, 2006.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of William Doane as an alternate member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from date of this meeting to December 1, 2004.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances L. Darcy, Town Clerk

NNUAL BUDGET MEETING

AND SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MAY 10, 2004

First Selectman Philip J. Miller called the Town Meeting to order at 8:06 p.m. Donald Malcarne was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk, Frances L. Darcy, read the call of the meeting. There were approximately 100 people in attendance.

The Moderator, Donald Malcarne introduced 3 Boy Scouts who were in attendance with Ken Kells. They are working towards their Community Badge.

The following resolutions were Read, Seconded and Voted:

RESOLVED: To increase the salary of the First Selectman from \$64,081 to \$66,003; the salary of the Town Clerk from \$41,672 to \$42,922; the salary of the Tax Collector from \$41,672 to \$42,922; the salary of the Board of Selectmen from \$7,227 to \$7,444 and the salary of the Town Treasurer from \$7,000 to \$7,210.

RESOLVED: To make the necessary appropriations as prepared and recommended by the Board of Finance for the support of schools, highways and the general government and other necessary objects in the amount of \$16,041,330.

First Selectman, Philip Miller gave an overview of the Budget. Elton Deckleman had some questions in reference to the sabbatical leave that was granted to Principal Thais Burrows and paying her \$50,000. Mr. Deckleman felt that \$50,000 should be deducted from the Board of Education budget. However, the Moderator, Donald Malcarne said the only options for the meeting were to approve or reject the entire budget.

After much discussion Board of Finance members Keith Bolles and Campbell Hudson were selected to take a hand count.

YES 93 No 5

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Douglas Demarest as a regular member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from date of this meeting to December 1, 2005.

RESOLVED: To consent and approve of the appointment by the Board of Selectmen of Susan Nilsen as an alternate member to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Term to run from the date of this meeting to December 1, 2005.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances L. Darcy, Town Clerk

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING JUNE 17, 2004

First Selectman, Philip J. Miller, called the Town Meeting to order at 8:05 p.m.. Alvin Wolfgram was elected Moderator. The Town Clerk, Frances D. Nolin, read the call of the meeting. There were approximately fifty (50) people in attendance.

The following resolutions were Read, Seconded and VOTED:

RESOLVED: To transfer \$24,700 into the Fire Department account. Said sum to be taken from the Contingency Fund as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: That the First Selectman be authorized to execute a permanent easement to Janet E. Miller to permit the maintenance, repair, and replacement of a certain existing septic system, including septic tank, drywell, leaching system and associated pipes as currently located in the Town of Essex, said property being at the intersection of Prospect Street and West Avenue and bounded north by Prospect Street, south and west by West Avenue, and east by land shown on Assessor map 32 as Lot 51 and owned now or formerly by Morris Propp et al, said easement to include the right to maintain, repair and replace such pipes as now cross Prospect Street underground in said location, and including the right to maintain, repair and replace said system in the area of the green space located between and at the junction of Prospect Street and West Avenue.

RESOLVED: To appropriate a sum not to exceed \$4,500 to the Harbor Management Commission. Said sum to be taken from the Harbor Management Commission Sinking Fund as recommended and approved by the Board of Finance.

RESOLVED: That the Town of Essex repeals the Sunday Movies Ordinance. A copy of said ordinance is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

RESOLVED: That the Town of Essex repeals the Social Security for Town Employees Ordinance. A copy of said ordinance is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

RESOLVED: That the Town of Essex adopts an ordinance Providing Property Tax Relief for Elderly or Disabled Homeowners. A copy of said ordinance is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

RESOLVED: That the Town of Essex adopts an Ordinance regarding Delinquent Taxpayers. A copy of said ordinance is on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

RESOLVED: That the Town of Essex approve the amendments to the Town's Open Space Plan to address the Town's Open Space Plan to address the Assessor's Open Space classification under Connecticut State Statute 12.107E, effective June 10, 2004, as approved by the Planning Commission on May 13, 2004. A copy of said amendments are on file in the Town Clerk's office.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Frances D. Nolin, Town

Town Meeting Schedule

Essex Board of Education

Meets at the Essex Elementary School, Centerbrook
Second Tuesday of Each Month 7:45 p.m.

Essex Housing Authority

Meets at the Community Building, Essex Court, Centerbrook
First Monday of Each Month 7 p.m.

THE FOLLOWING MEET AT THE TOWN HALL

Board of Finance

Third Thursday of Each Month 7 p.m.

Board of Selectmen

First Wednesday 4:30 p.m. and Third Wednesday 7 p.m. of Each Month

Conservation Commission

Second Thursday of Each Month 7 p.m.

Democratic Town Committee

Fourth Wednesday of Each Month 7:30 p.m.

Essex Land Conservation Trust

Second Monday of Each Month 7 p.m.

Harbor Management Commission

Fourth Thursday of Each Month 7:30 p.m., Third Thursday Nov., Dec.

Inland Wetlands and Water Courses Commission

Second Tuesday of Each Month 7:30 p.m.

Park and Recreation Commission

First Wednesday of Each Month 7:30 p.m.

Planning Commission

Second Thursday of Each Month 7:30 p.m.

Republican Town Committee

Second Wednesday of Each Month 7:30 p.m.

Sanitary Waste Commission

Second Monday of Each Month 7 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals

Third Tuesday of Each Month 8 p.m.

Zoning Commission

Third Monday of Each Month 7:30 p.m.

Water Pollution Control Authority

Second Monday of Each Month 7 p.m.

Essex Community Fund

Second Wednesday of Each Month 6 p.m.

Town Government Reports

Board of Assessment Appeals

In September, 2003, the Board conducted one Motor Vehicle meeting. There were no appeals.

In April and May, 2004, the Board conducted 9 public meetings to hear taxpayer grievances regarding real estate and personal property assessments. There were 207 appeals.

The function of the Board is to ensure taxpayers a proper, fair and equitable interpretation of existing assessment guidelines established by the four-year property revaluation mandate. Inequities or errors are considered and adjusted if indicated.

Lois A. Ely, Chairman

Frank J. Flores

Anne J. Dougherty

Board of Selectmen

The three-member board of selectmen are elected citizens who serve two-year terms. In mid June 2003, first selectman Peter Webster resigned, and for five months, selectman Ken Wexler became the interim first selectman. The November election saw selectman Philip Miller win the first selectman position, with Norman Needleman and Vincent Pacileo elected as selectmen.

The Board meets twice monthly to discuss and decide on policy, appointments to commissions, and the yearly budget. The board of selectmen works closely with the board of finance. Most decisions reached by these two boards then proceed to a town meeting, where citizens have the final say.

In late 2003, the town completed the statistical revaluation process that is mandated by the state of Connecticut. Our grand list increase was a significant forty-seven percent. The mill rate was lowered during the budget process from 20 mills to 14.9 mills. More than two thirds of our budget goes towards education. The new budget contains nearly ten percent more spending, nearly nine tenths of which is for the increased bond schedule for our regional school building projects and contractual obligations. The rest goes to police, fire, ambulance, health, parks, land use, and other town services. The town presently employs thirty-five people on the municipal side, who are aided by volunteer and elected citizen board members and appointed citizen commissioners.

Infrastructure projects are guided by our public works department, and the new year brings many new initiatives, from providing modest tax relief for senior homeowners living on modest fixed incomes, to upgrading the town hall technology, developing public swimming at Viney Hill Brook Park, setting guidelines for care of municipal grounds and watercourses, and completing further research towards appropriate renovations of our elementary school, which will be voted on by citizens.

We now have a new regional hazardous household waste facility, an updated plan of conservation and development, and a long-term plan for addressing future services as the base for reasonable and responsive budgeting. Essex is like many small towns in that we are feeling the pinch of less federal and state aid. Essex has a strong base of citizens who work together well to take on challenges in a positive and constructive manner.

Phil Miller, First Selectman

Conservation Commission

The Essex Conservation Commission began to transform a portion of Viney Hill Brook Park from an abandoned quarry into a passive recreational preserve. This spring, our members cut a hiking trail around the small pond. We celebrated Mother's Day with neighbors and friends of the preserve planting (and deer protecting) low grow sumacs, highbush blueberries, bayberries, junipers and red cedars (40 plants in all). The vegetation is meant to protect water quality through erosion control, augment wildlife habitat and provide privacy to property owners abutting the trail. Prior to the Essex Fire Department's burning of a derelict garage, two large oil tanks were professionally disposed of. Once the remaining debris is removed, we intend to reclaim the disturbed site. Other immediate plans include a boundary fence and visitor parking.

Each member of the commission expressed concern at a Public Hearing held in November over the effects that a proposed subdivision could have on the town's Bushy Hill wilderness area. The subdivision received approval with the requirement that the interior lot owners maintain a permanent evergreen buffer to shield the nature trails.

Updating the town's conservation easement inventory continued. The commission designed "Public Access" and "No Public Access" signs for distribution by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Future town conservation easements will be marked appropriately.

Carl Kaufmann tendered his resignation to the commission after years of outstanding service. There are now three commission vacancies, two regular and one alternate. Current members, Nancy Arnold, Doug Demarest, Ed Marlowe, Anne Penniman, Sam Powell and Kay Tucker, meet the second Thursday of each month and also routinely schedule on-site maintenance of Canfield Woods, Bushy Hill Nature Preserve, and the passive portion of Viney Hill Brook Park.

Kay Tucker, Chair

Economic Development Commission

The Essex Economic Development Commission (EDC) was formed by a town meeting in 1998 with a simple mission: serve as an advocate for local businesses and work to preserve an adequate balance between business and residential properties. Our members attend meetings of the Essex Board of Trade, meet with business owners individually, and address most business inquiries for the Town of Essex received through the Selectmen's office. The commission now meets monthly at 2:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of every month.

We established a website at <http://www.essexct.gov> in the fall of 2003. The website, updated frequently, features a list of available commercial properties for sale or lease, EDC meeting minutes, links to business resources, and a public forum for residents to exchange their ideas.

The town budgeted funds this year to hire an economic development consultant to draft a comprehensive plan for our town's economic future. The goal is to better balance our residential to commercial property tax base without degrading the character of our community. We welcome public participation in this process, and look forward to hearing your comments.

EDC members have been active in researching and applying for grant opportunities to improve our village centers. Similar grants have been awarded to other small communities, and we are hopeful we can acquire the funds to make our villages a safer place to live, work, and visit.

Lack of adequate parking remains an issue throughout the villages. The EDC is working with the Selectmen on ways to improve this situation, as well as investigating other alternatives. One alternative being investigated by an EDC subcommittee and the Estuary Transit District is a shuttle bus service. If implemented, a regular service could be timed to the Essex Steam Train schedule to provide a convenient means of transporting train patrons, tourists, and residents throughout Essex, Centerbrook, and Ivoryton. We welcome your comments. Please feel free to contact us through the website, or call EDC chairman Lon Seidman at 767-2600 x3019.

EDC Members as of August 1, 2004:

Lon Seidman, Chairman

Mark Uihlein

Bill Foster

David Winstead

Norman Needleman

Lee Thompson

Fire Marshal and Building Official

During the fiscal year 2003-2004 the Fire Marshal's Office investigated all fire related incidences that the Essex Fire Engine Co. No. 1 responded to, as well as follow-up inspections. Yearly inspections were conducted on all health care and liquor establishments. A total of 26 Blasting Permits were issued and the Burning Officer issued burning permits for residents to burn brush only. This office also submits the National Fire Incident reports (NFIRS) to the Bureau of State Fire Marshal's Office. We would like to take this opportunity to remind residents to check smoke detectors for proper operation and remember to install fresh batteries when you change your clocks.

During the fiscal year 2003-2004 the building department issued a total of 651 permits for new construction, alterations, roofing, plumbing, heating, electrical, and propane gas installations. There were 23 new single family dwellings constructed.

As of September 1, 2004 the State of Connecticut has adopted the International Residential Code for one and two family dwellings. Contractors and homeowners are invited to stop in and pick up a handout describing the significant changes from the previous code.

If you have any building related questions, please feel free to call me at 767-4344, ext 117. To schedule inspections, please call the Permit Clerk at ext. 119 and leave your permit number, address, and type of inspection needed.

Keith C. Nolin, Acting Fire Marshal, Acting Building Official

Harbor Management Commission

During the 2003-04 year the Harbor Management Commission began the long process of applying for a permit to dredge certain areas of the main river harbor that have shoaled over the past 30 plus years since its last dredging. This project is a rare combination of the Town of Essex, the Harbor Commission and the commercial interests that benefit from our harbor. The costs of the project will be split three ways among these groups.

The Commission has been active in the project to create an equitable method of judging and handling requests for larger docks. There have been some highly publicized dock applications in some of the towns along river that generated interest in giving more local control over these applications.

The primary work of the Commission is to maintain and manage the moorings and water access throughout the town.

Jeff Going, Chairman

Health Department

The Essex Health Department concerns itself with all aspects of environmental and public health in the Town of Essex. These include permitting and inspection of wells, septic systems, restaurants, day care and nursing home facilities, as well as investigation of food-borne illnesses, reportable diseases, toxic lead cases, sewage breakouts and other reported or potential public health problems. The Health Department also performs soil testing and reviews engineering plans for all new subdivisions in Essex.

The Essex Food Service Inspector made one hundred and thirty food service facility inspections during this past year. All restaurant, school and nursing home food operations as well as special events are inspected. Day-care licensing inspections are done by this office on a two-year cycle. Other inspections and responses to individual complaints were made at a level commensurate with past years. In addition, the state now requires annual inspections of beauty salons and barbershops.

Although new housing starts have declined somewhat, building additions and renovations have increased significantly over the past four years. The Public Health Code, requires review and permitting of all building alterations or changes in use, as well as lot line changes and accessory structures such as pools and sheds. Permit activity is summarized below for the past year:

The Essex Health Department, in conjunction with the Essex Water Pollution Control Authority, oversees a wastewater management program. The purpose of this program is to safeguard the surface and subsurface waters of Essex through a program of routine inspection and maintenance of private septic systems. In addition, we utilized funds from a state grant to test 50 well water samples for possible septic contamination during the past year.

During the past year this office was involved in strategic planning of regional response to smallpox and other bioterrorism threats. These efforts have been mandated by the State Department of Public Health. Providing resources for public education on environmental and personal health issues is an important part of our mission. During the past year we made available information to residents on a variety of topics such as radon, mold and mildew, lead poisoning, tick and mosquito-borne illnesses, food safety, well water testing and septic system maintenance.

We appreciate those agencies and officials in town who augment and provide direct support for our efforts, especially the WPCA, the Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley, the Building Department, the Zoning Enforcement Officer and the Animal Control Officer.

Christopher W. Goff, M.D., F.A.A.P., Director of Health

Carol L. Speer, R.S., Chief Sanitarian

Housing Authority

The Essex Housing Authority is a separate government agency that manages the Essex Court affordable elderly housing complex in Centerbrook. We are not a division of the town. Our budget is separate from the town's budget and is prepared for and approved by our Board of Commissioners. Our volunteer Board comprises five members: Selene Sweck, Chair; Keith Crehan, Secretary; tenant commissioner Edna Appleby; Mary Beth Stebbins and Bruce MacMillan.

In March, the Housing Authority launched our new web site, www.essexhousingauthority.org. It includes a rent calculator that allows visitors to find out what the monthly rent would be based upon estimated income and medical expenses.

The building of ten new apartments to augment our current inventory of thirty-six units is on hold at the recommendation of the CT Department of Economic & Community Development until two complaints to the CT Commission on Human Rights & Opportunities are resolved.

As always, we are grateful to the caring staff and qualified volunteers representing the many fine service agencies and non-profits in our region, and to everyone who helps tenants at Essex Court extend independent living and maintain quality of life. Included is Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley, Essex Ambulance Association, Essex Fire Department, Essex Police, Essex Public Library, Estuary Council of Seniors, Meals on Wheels, Shoreline Soup Kitchens, FISH, area houses of worship, Agency on Aging, Municipal Agent on Aging, Essex Winter Series, Essex Rotary Club, Essex Community Fund and the Essex Elementary School. We remain ever thankful for this and all generous community-based support.
Deb Cottrill, Executive Director and Public Housing Manager

Municipal Agent for the Elderly

Each of Connecticut's 169 towns is required by law, pursuant to *Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-127b*, to appoint a Municipal Agent for the Elderly to serve a two year term. The Elderly Services Division of the Department of Social Services has the responsibility for assuring that the provisions of the Municipal Agent Statute are carried out by the Municipalities. The Municipal Agent is required to provide seniors, and those who wish to help them, with information on available programs and resources, and to guide them to the Community, State and Federal agencies that provide the assistance they need.

The Selectmen's Office at Town Hall has available the information needed to apply for Federal and State benefits such as winter heating assistance, food assistance, financial assistance, housing, Conn-Pace, and Medicare Supplemental Options. Additionally, information regarding social security, legal services, exercise and nutrition, transportation, senior clubs, adult daycare, home healthcare, education, employment and volunteer opportunities can be obtained from this office.

The Municipal Agent attends training sessions, meetings and seminars coordinated by the Connecticut Department of Social Services and other organizations that assist seniors. The Municipal Agent is required by statute to report statistics on the inquiries received during the year. This information is reported annually to the Department of Social Services and to the First Selectman. This past year, 31 residents received fuel assistance and 32 residents received a renter's rebate. Additionally, this office received numerous inquiries for other services such as the Medicare Prescription Drug Card, transportation to medical appointments, food stamps and State Supplemental Programs.

Lynne Beetz, Municipal Agent for the Elderly

Park & Recreation Commission

The Commission supports and administers the following programs:

Youth (grades 1-6) Summer Program (Elementary School)

Summer Concert series (Essex & Ivoryton Parks)

Fall Kindergarten Soccer (Comstock Field)

Youth (grades 1-6) Winter Basketball (Elementary School)

Easter Egg Hunt (Grove Street Park)

Coffee House (Ivoryton)

Essex Family Day (Grove Street Park)

Youth tennis & adult yoga

The Commission takes an active role, and encourages full usage of Town facilities. An operating budget of \$132,100 was allotted for park maintenance and support of program activities in 2004/05.

The acquisition of the Viney Hill Brook property, along with the development of recreational facilities, will create a need for capital funding to fully advance this long sought after park development initiative.

\$15,200 was expended in the 2002-2003 fiscal year for Schematic Design and Cost Estimation. Capital improvement funds in the amount of \$27,166 are available in the current budget year. Follow-on construction, operation, and maintenance funds will be requested this year, and in the fiscal year 2005/06. It is hoped that the park will be available for public use in summer 2005, if additional funding is provided.

The lighted tennis courts behind the Town Hall (Grove Street Park), which are the Town's most heavily utilized recreational facility, have undergone crack repair and complete re-surfacing in May 2004. Additionally, screens have been installed to shield the adjacent parking lot, and new nets, winches, and trash receptacles are in place.

Comstock and Hubbard fields infields were professionally restored in 2003, and favorable comments have been received from the baseball organizations as to current field maintenance.

The Essex Town Green grass areas have deteriorated due to high usage, vehicular traffic, and lack of an irrigation system. The Commission approved a budget for restoration and installation of an irrigation system following construction of the new restroom facility in 2005.

Essex will continue to offer the best recreational facilities that the Town's operating budget can provide and encourages feedback from residents, and active participation in Commission meetings.

Alan F. Miller

Planning Commission

The Essex Planning Commission held regular monthly meetings along with several public hearings, special meetings, site walks and workshops.

A number of subdivisions were reviewed and considered by the Commission. The Commission also considered and approved various requests for bond reduction and road acceptance.

A number of referrals from the Zoning Commission concerning amendments and/or additions to the Essex Zoning Regulations were reviewed and recommendations made.

The Planning Commission is continuing its updating of the 1991 Town Plan of Conservation and Development, and its work on revising the Subdivision Regulations. The Commission is also working on a proposal for a new Business/Commerce District.

The Planning Commission has members sitting on the Economic Development Commission, and the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission and receives monthly reports.

Current needs for Affordable Housing are also being discussed.

Russell Smith was reappointed Chairman and Laura Champion was reappointed Vice Chairman. The balance of members consists of full members Linda Herman, August Pampel and Raymond Gastil; and John Beveridge and Carla Feroni as alternates.

The Essex Planning Commission continues to pursue areas for open space and to review current regulations for possible changes to manage growth and enhance our sewer avoidance program.

Russell Smith, Chairman

Probate Court

The Essex Probate Court is located at the Essex Town Hall, 29 West Avenue, Essex and is open Monday through Friday 9a.m. to 3p.m. with other hours by appointment. Judge Deborah M. Pearl is the Probate Judge and Valerie N. Shickel is the appointed Court Clerk. Stella Beaudoin is the Assistant Clerk.

The type of matters handled in the probate court include decedent estates, children's matters, conservators for incapacitated individuals, guardians of mentally retarded individuals, adoptions, name changes for adults and children, reviews of trustee accounts, passport applications, and other family sensitive issues.

The probate court is a statutory court, which means all jurisdictions, and powers given to the probate court come from the State of Connecticut State Legislature. General powers of the probate court may be found in C.G.S. 45a-98, 99. Uniform costs charged by the probate court are based upon state statutes, which may be found in C.G.S. 45a-105 through 45a-112.

Following are fees for United States passports as regulated by the U.S. State Department; Effective August 19, 2002 for applicants Age 16 and over passport fee of \$55 and Execution fee of \$30. For under Age 16 passport fee of \$40 and execution fee of \$30. For passport renewal by mail (if applicant qualifies) total fee of \$55. Expedited Service by U. S. State Department adds \$60 per application and adds 2-way overnight delivery postage. Passport applications may be downloaded from www.travel.state.gov. or you may stop by the probate court. Special appointments may be arranged with the court if you are unable to come to execute a passport within normal court hours.

The Essex Probate Court for year ending 2003 processed, 46 testate estates, 1 intestate estate, 27 small affidavit estates, 68 trust matters, 8 conservatorships and 40 matters involving children.

You are invited to visit the Essex Probate Court to obtain public information booklets concerning all the matters handled by the probate court and meet the judge and court personnel.

Hon. Deborah M. Pearl

Public Works

We had a tough winter, but the paving of River Road was completed in Spring 2004. The compost leaf area is open for residents to drop off leaves. Compost is available by asking the Landfill attendant.

The town crew thanks you for your cooperation this year.

Dave Caroline, Public Works Director

Registrars of Voters

During this past year, the Registrars of Voters have conducted one Municipal Election, one Democratic Presidential Primary, and one Referendum. It is the responsibility of the Registrars to keep the Voter Registry up to date, admit new voters and remove those who have moved or died.

The Registrars must be available for town meetings when a vote by checklist is required. In addition, the Registrars attend state conferences and make reports to the Secretary of State.

Lois A. Ely

Elizabeth G. Schellens

Resident Trooper/Essex Police

The Essex Resident Trooper's Office consists of the Resident State Trooper and the Essex Police. The Resident State Trooper is provided to the Town of Essex by the Connecticut State Police through a contractual agreement. The Resident Trooper supervises the daily operations of the Essex Police, which currently consists of four Essex Police Officers. Additionally, a part-time Marine Patrol Officer and three Boat Operators supplement the Essex Police to staff the marine patrol.

By virtue of participation in the Resident Trooper program, the Town of Essex has access to the wide spectrum of Connecticut State Police resources. Troop F in Westbrook provides radio communications and prisoner facilities, and a field office is maintained in the Essex Town Hall for the convenience of Essex citizens.

During 2003 (calendar year), there were 196 criminal investigations in Essex, covering a wide variety of offenses. 130 motor vehicle accidents were also investigated, and it should be noted that this figure includes accidents that occurred on Route 9 within the Town of Essex.

The more serious crimes are referred to as the Index Crimes, and are tracked by the F.B.I. as part of the Uniform Crime Report (U.C.R.). These crimes include murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny, and stolen motor vehicles. There were 40 index crimes in Essex during 2003, the lowest number since at least 1991.

One measurement used to gauge the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies is the "clearance rate". This rate measures the percentage of reported crimes that are "solved" and result in an arrest. During 2003 the clearance rate for Essex was 43%, far exceeding the statewide average of 20%.

The clearance rate for crimes not tracked by the U.C.R. (such as vandalisms, narcotics violations, simple assaults, etc.) was 76%, a remarkably high figure. There were 131 criminal arrests in Essex during 2003. Motor vehicle enforcement activity continues to be a high priority in Essex). 2003 saw an increase in both infractions and written warnings that were issued. Targeted areas are those where citizen complaints are received, and/or areas with high accident rates. Grant funding supported an additional 1348 hours of patrol time during FY 03/04, with an emphasis on D.U.I. and motor vehicle enforcement.

Four Ford Crown Victoria cruisers (2004, 2003, 2000, 1998) and a patrol boat (23' Parker) are currently owned by the Town of Essex.

Trooper Scott Wisner, Essex Resident Trooper

Sanitary Waste Commission

The Essex Landfill/Recycling Center, located off exit 4 of Route 9 on Dump Road, ran smoothly with controlled costs under the direction of Carol Speer, Town Sanitarian, and Mike Birner, Landfill Supervisor, and his assistants, Earl Brown and Scott Hofmann.

The new Household Hazardous Waste Facility under the direction of the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency (CRERPA) opened to the participating nine town residents on May 22, 2004. Residents can drop-off toxic materials on 16 scheduled Saturdays during the year. The facility serves the towns of Essex, Old Saybrook, Deep River, Chester, Lyme, Old Lyme, Westbrook, Clinton and Killingworth. Flyers with pertinent information are available at town halls and CRERPA and through newspaper notices.

Planned improvements at the Landfill/Recycling Center including road paving and a better and safer traffic flow were completed in May 2004.

The Sanitary Waste Commission meets the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. immediately following the Water Pollution Control Authority meeting in Room B at the Essex Town Hall. Visitors are welcome.

Henry May, Chairman

Superintendent of Schools

The Regional School District No. 4 had an official student population during 2003-04 of 880; 338 students at John Winthrop Junior High School, 532 at Valley Regional High and 10 placed in out-of-district institutions. Our net operating budget for 2003-04 was \$11,538,740 and our debt service costs were \$2,527,275, for total gross expenses of \$14,066,015. We had 36.2 certified employees at John Winthrop and 56.5 at Valley.

Work continues on the District's three construction projects. The new administration building should be completed and ready for occupancy near the start of the 2004-05 school year. The John Winthrop project will be nearly complete by the start of school and finishing touches should be completed during the first quarter of 2005. While great progress has been made at Valley Regional, work will continue through most of 2005. However, it is expected that the new auditorium and the new Media Center will be completed and ready for occupancy during the last calendar quarter of 2004. Construction on all projects should be completed and all buildings returned to full use by the end of 2005.

The graduating class of 2004 consisted of 106 students, 74 of whom plan to attend four-year colleges, 12 will be attending two-year colleges, 4 will be at vocational schools, 13 have found employment, 2 will be in military service, and 1 in 5th year of post-graduate study.

In the latest administration of the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) taken by our tenth graders in the spring of 2003, their average mathematics score was 260.9 with a score of 261 being the goal set by the state.

The average science score was 265.6 with the goal being 261; the average reading score was 264.3 with a goal score of 258, and the average writing score was 258.8 with a goal score of 250.

The eighth graders took the Connecticut Mastery Test in the fall of 2003. Their average scaled score in mathematics was 255 with a goal of 246, an average reading score of 266 with a goal of 235, and an average writing score of 273 with a goal score of 239.

Thomas A. Forcella, Superintendent of Schools

Essex Elementary School

The major goal for Essex Elementary School during the 2003-2004 school year continued to be the improvement of student performance in the areas of reading, writing and math. The improvement of student learning is a direct result of the district's efforts to enhance instruction by focusing on individual student needs. Data obtained from State testing (CMT and CAPT) as well as ongoing district assessments is analyzed by staff to drive instruction and curriculum modification and development.

Connecticut Mastery Test results for fall of 2003 demonstrate significant growth in student performance in the area of reading. Essex fourth and sixth graders scored among the top twenty districts in the State out of 169 districts (4th grade – 19/169, top 11%, 6th grade – 13/169, top 8%). Writing scores in the areas of "Composing/Revising and Editing" were at or above the Educational Reference Group C average for both grades four and six. However, performance on the direct assessment of writing was slightly below the ERG average for both grade levels. Math achievement in grade four continues to lag behind achievement in reading and writing, while math performance at the sixth grade level exceeded 80% of the students at the Goal level for the second consecutive year (6th grade -40/169, top 24%).

During the 2002-2003 school year, the conceptually based K-5 math program, "Investigations", was partially implemented with thirty-two out of fifty-two teachers region-wide. This year, all teachers K-5 used the "Investigations" program. Concerns expressed by parents and teachers about certain aspects of the program, have resulted in modifications to the program for 2004-2005. Supplementary materials will be used to strengthen the instruction of basic facts and standard algorithms. Ability grouping will be implemented in grades four, five and six. Administration and staff will monitor the implementation of the program.

The World Language/Spanish program was in full implementation in grades K-6 this year. The two teachers, both native speakers, provided Spanish instruction to every student at Essex Elementary. The

Young Scholars Program expanded to include a second teacher for the elementary level. The “Jason Project” was added to the repertoire of challenging activities for Essex students. The region-wide summer school program experienced growth this year. Last year’s program for students entering grades one through five was expanded to include students entering grades six through nine.

Water Pollution Authority

The Town of Essex continues to enforce its Wastewater Management Ordinance requiring septic maintenance and construction oversight.

The lagoons have been closed for the entire year and regular maintenance was rendered unnecessary. They will remain closed indefinitely and eventually phased out under the direction of the Department of Environmental Protection. Plans for the phase-out will be developed during the next fiscal year.

Haulers using disposal facilities outside Essex are cooperating by reporting their activities which allow us to maintain accurate data on septic systems and pumpouts.

Bi-annual tests at surface and groundwater sites continue.

The Authority meets the second Monday of each month at the Essex Town Hall. Visitors are welcome.

John Moran, Chairman

Town Clerk’s Office

This past fiscal year, 2003-2004 the Town of Essex had seven Town Meetings, three Public Hearings, one Town Election, and one Referendum for Regional District #4. There were two new ordinances adopted this fiscal year.

The following is a list of recordings for the Town of Essex:

Birth Certificates	66
Death Certificates	122
Dog Licenses	935
(Kennel License	1)
Land Records	3,314
Marriage Certificates	47
Sports Licenses	405
Subdivision Maps	3
Survey Maps	34
Trade Names	47

Conveyance Tax Deposited to General Fund	\$172,024.37
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This office is in the process of putting all land records up to thirty (30) years onto a computer that is available for the public to access. We were awarded a \$7,000 Grant from the State Library. This Grant will be utilized to preserve old vital records that are retained permanently.

REMINDER

** If you are a Veteran be sure to file your DD-214 (Discharge) with this*

office by September 30th in order to receive the Veteran’s exemption.

** If you are 65 years of age, or older, you are entitled to receive a free
fishing or hunting license.*

Residents may apply for admission as electors at the office of the Town Clerk on a daily basis or with the Registrar of Voters. Registrars hold special sessions prior to primaries and elections.

Our office is open Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. We hope to provide you with the best possible service and appreciate your support.

Frances D. Nolin, Town Clerk

Dana J. Novorio, Assistant Town Clerk

Town Counsel

During the past year this office handled a variety of legal matters of significance to the Town. These included drafting Ordinances regarding various issues, including property tax relief for elderly or disabled

homeowners, street numbering for emergency identification purposes, and time and notice restrictions for the demolition of historic buildings.

The Town concluded the land transfer and lease transactions necessary to enable the Household Hazardous Waste Facility to open on property of the Town of Essex on Dump Road.

The pleadings have been closed on the Town's Quiet Title action with respect to property at the end of New City Street, and the matter has been claimed to the Trial List.

There is currently only one personal injury claim against the Town pending. This matter is defended through the Town's insurance coverage. By Ordinance, no matter may be settled prior to adequate notice to and review by the Board of Selectmen.

David M. Royston, Town Counsel

<u>ASSESSOR'S REPORT</u>			
	<u>2003 Annual Report</u>		
<u>GRAND LIST</u>		<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
<u>Real Estate</u>			
Gross		\$ 590,200,690	\$ 907,123,400
Exemptions:			
	Veteran's	\$ 1,405,500	\$ 1,429,500
	Veteran's Additional	\$ 657,750	\$ 663,750
	Vet. Add. Reimb.*	\$ 198,000	\$ 222,000
	Blind	\$ 9,000	\$ 21,000
	Disability	\$ 2,000	\$ -
	Other	\$ 800	\$ 800
Net		\$ 587,927,640	\$ 904,786,350
<u>Personal Property</u>			
Gross		\$ 34,353,479	\$ 30,147,648
Exemptions:			
	Mechanics Tools	\$ 2,070	\$ 2,470
	Manufacturers*	\$ 7,150,710	\$ 4,494,090
	Misc.	\$ -	\$ 340
Net		\$ 27,200,699	\$ 25,650,748
<u>Motor Vehicle</u>			
Gross		\$ 52,974,160	\$ 53,660,480
Exemptions:			
	Veteran's	\$	\$

		172,690	164,910
	Veteran's Additional	\$ 65,310	\$ 56,460
	Vet. Add. Reimb.*	\$ 3,690	\$ 1,780
	Disability	\$ -	\$ -
	Other	\$ -	\$ -
	Manuf. Truck Reimb.*	\$ 432,040	\$ 198,400
Net		\$ 52,300,430	\$ 53,238,930
<u>Totals</u>			
Gross		\$ 677,528,329	\$ 990,931,528
Exemptions:			
	Veteran's	\$ 1,578,190	\$ 1,594,410
	Veteran's Additional	\$ 723,060	\$ 720,210
	Vet. Add. Reimb.*	\$ 201,690	\$ 223,780
	Blind	\$ 9,000	\$ 21,000
	Disability	\$ 2,000	\$ -
	Other	\$ 2,870	\$ 3,610
	Manufacturer & Truck*	\$ 7,582,750	\$ 4,692,490
Net		\$ 667,428,769	\$ 983,676,028
*Partially Reimbursed by State of Connecticut			
October 1, 2003	Gross	\$ 990,931,528	
<u>Category</u>	<u>Assessment</u>		<u>% of Total</u>
<u>Real Estate</u>	\$ 907,123,400		92%
Res.	772,188,000	85%	
Comm.	102,029,400	11%	
Ind.	32,550,400	4%	
Vacant	58,800	0%	
Use	365,000	0%	
	\$907,191,600	100%	

<u>Personal Property</u>	\$		3%
	30,147,648		
<u>Motor Vehicle</u>	\$		5%
	53,660,480		
			100%
<u>Comparative Grand Lists - Net Taxable</u>			
<u>Item</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	
			(+) or (-)
Real Estate	\$	\$	\$
	587,927,640	904,786,350	316,858,710
Personal Property	\$	\$	\$
	27,200,699	25,650,748	(1,549,951)
Motor Vehicle	\$	\$	\$
	52,300,430	53,238,930	938,500
Total	\$	\$	\$
	667,428,769	983,676,028	316,247,259
<u>Tax Revenue Comparison</u>			
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	
Net List	\$	\$	
	667,428,769	983,676,028	
Mill Rate	0.02	0.0149	
	\$	\$	
	13,348,575	14,656,773	
Respectfully submitted,			
Jessica Graves, CCMAII			
Assessor			

Mill Rates

1988	1989*	1990	1991	1992
27	9.9	11.25	11.25	11.25
1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
11.75	12.25	13.2	13.5	14

1998	1999*	2000	2001	2002
14.5	16.75	16.75	18.25	20
2003*				
14.9				

Community and Service Organizations

Ambulance Association

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the residents and businesses of our community for their support. Our members and their families deserve thanks for their dedicated service, responding without hesitation to calls for assistance every day, committed to providing quality emergency care.

We responded to 801 emergency calls in 2003, and the need for our services continues to grow along with our town. We also provide emergency medical response as requested to our mutual aid towns and assist at many local civic functions.

Our members continue to upgrade their training to meet the challenges of emergency service in our changing world. They must be prepared to respond to any emergency, knowing the possible dangers.

With the generosity of our supporters we have been able to continue to operate without tax funds from the Town of Essex. Our operating budget is acquired through donations, memorial gifts and billing. We would like to thank everyone for their support.

Last year we took delivery of our new ambulance, retiring our 1990, and retaining our 1994. The average life span of an ambulance is five years but with good maintenance we have been able to double our usage. For the first time we found it necessary to obtain a loan to cover half of the \$155,000.00 cost. We have an excellent safety record but have experienced steadily increasing costs for insurance coverage, training and equipment.

We are always looking for exceptional people to join our Corps. If you think you might be interested in being a member contact us or one of our members for information.

Once again, a special thanks to all our supporters and best wishes for a healthy and safe year.

Judi Reynolds, Chief of Service

Joseph G. Bombaci, President

CATV Council V

CATV Council V represents the subscribers to Cable Television in the towns of Chester, Clinton, Deep River, Durham, Essex, Haddam, Killingworth, Old Saybrook and Westbrook. Each town is entitled to one representative for each 5000 residents or portion thereof. Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of alternating months (September, November, January, March, May and July). All meetings are open to the public. The public is urged to attend and express their joys and concerns with the service provided by the franchisee. The current representative of Essex is Lon Seidman.

The CATV V inquiry about accounting practices associated with the Community Access Fee resulted in Docket No. 04-04-13 and a review of accounting practices for several franchises. Findings were made in favor of the council. There have been subsequent interrogatories and orders. The orders are being appealed. CATV V is copied with all official correspondence between Comcast and the DPUC. The status of this and other DPUC dockets are available on the web.

Efforts have been made by the Council to secure more reasonable rates for CATV service to providers of emergency services. Currently firehouses are considered commercial establishments for rate purposes. The "hookup" is provided free of charge to schools, libraries, town halls and one other designated public safety office.

CATV V is financed by a \$2,000 annual required contribution from the franchisee. The money is awarded annually to cover the expense of operation. CATV V has contracted with CRERPA for services.

In an effort to return the funds to the community and to encourage the use of the educational and public access channels, CATV V has established a Public School Broadcast Technology Grant. Local schools are encouraged to submit an application stating what equipment they need. Students are required to attend a meeting of the Council and present their request. \$1,000 grants have been awarded to Haddam-Killingworth High School. An application from Morgan High School of Clinton is in process.

Winnie Olson

CRERPA (Regional Planning Agency)

The Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency (CRERPA) is in its 36th year of planning for the nine-town Estuary region. CRERPA consists of two representatives from each member town, one representing the Board of Selectmen and the other representing the Planning Commission. The CRERPA Board meets on the first Monday of each month at 7:30pm at the Agency office in the Saybrook Junction Marketplace, next to the train station. Visitors are always welcome to stop by during regular work hours, from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday.

CRERPA has a staff of seven full-time employees, including a director, three planners, a GIS specialist and a financial administrator. Three additional staff members work part-time. The largest portion of the CRERPA budget continues to be the annual contribution of its nine member towns, with other major support coming from the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the State Office of Policy and Management, and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

During the year, CRERPA Planner Jean Davies helped Essex complete a comprehensive update of their municipal plan. Amy Cabaniss serves as the CRERPA Regional Recycling Coordinator and Environmental Educator. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on June 24th, for the regional household waste permanent facility in Essex. Upon request from the CT DEP, the CRERPA publication "*Boaters' Wheel: A Guide to Keeping Connecticut Waters Clean*" was reprinted with DEP and EPA sponsorship. These circular slide charts, created by Ms. Cabaniss for CRERPA, are being distributed throughout the state to boaters via DEP spill kits. Planner Jean Davies is nearing completion of nine individual town Natural Hazard Mitigation plans. These plans include mitigation of natural hazards including hurricanes, flooding, tornadoes, drought, wildfire, and winter storms. During the fiscal year, Planner Torrance Downes completed a comprehensive study of private residential docks within the lower Connecticut River.

Essex Board Members as of June 30, 2004: Ray Gastil and Carla Feroni.

Linda Krause, Executive Director

Child and Family Agency

Child and Family Agency of Southeastern Connecticut is about children. Our mission is to promote the well-being and development of all children and their families, in particular to give priority to the unmet needs of children lacking physical, emotional and intellectual care and nurturing. Child and Family Agency has made a significant difference in the lives of children-in-need and their families since 1809.

Our Essex office is a licensed Child Guidance Clinic providing parent-child counseling services, home-based clinical services and consultative services.

The Early Head Start Program provides comprehensive services to pregnant women, infants and toddlers and their families.

Last year, Child and Family served over 10,000 children birth to eighteen and their families. Our Essex office has averaged 100 people served annually in Centerbrook, Essex, and Ivoryton and 750 people throughout Middlesex County.

Child and Family appreciates the support received from the Essex Community Fund, area United Ways, the Essex Savings Bank's Community Investment Program, private foundations, local businesses and individuals, and state and federal agencies and the efforts of its own auxiliaries.

We thank the many Essex residents who have played vital roles in the shaping of this organization into the respected leader it is today.

The Essex Auxiliary is an active group of shoreline women who promote the mission of the Agency and raise unrestricted funds in the support of the services and capital projects of the Agency. Fundraising events have included a Valentine Dance, the Art Springs Eternal Opening at the Brick Gallery, the popular Spring Fashion Show, and a biennial Holiday House Tour. Auxiliary membership is open to anyone interested in promoting the well-being of children and their families. Interested persons should call Judy Lovelace at 860-443-2896, ext. 1403 or visit our web site at www.cfapress.org.

Judy Lovelace, Director of Resource Development & Community Relations

Connecticut River Gateway Commission

In 1973, the Connecticut Legislature recognized the Lower Connecticut River Valley as one of the State's most important natural, recreational and scenic areas, and authorized establishment of the Connecticut

River Gateway Commission. The Commission became operational in 1974, with eight eligible towns, two regional planning agencies and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection participating. In 2004, the Commission approved revised zoning standards to “preserve the unique scenic, ecological, scientific and historic values of the lower Connecticut River valley for the enjoyment of present and future generations of Connecticut citizens.” The new standards include a requirement for a vegetated buffer area along the riverfront, clarification of limitations on the height of structures, and greater emphasis on blending new structures with existing topography and landscaping. These standards are in response to continuing concerns over highly visible large new homes along the river bank and in the upland hills facing the river, and extensive tree-cutting for new development or new views for existing development. The Commission helped organize and present a series of informational forums about the Connecticut River. The “Charting the Course” series originated with a forum on docks organized by the Connecticut River Museum. Other forums have included a meeting to elicit public concerns about river issues, a panel discussion on economic issues, which included representatives of tourism and marine trades, and a panel of design professionals discussing the scenic values of the river.

A new initiative designed to address key threats to the natural resources of the Connecticut River Estuary has been created by Judy Preston, with financial and administrative assistance from the Gateway Commission. With a planning grant from NOAA through the Connecticut DEP, the Tidewater Institute created a booklet entitled “Protecting the Character of the Lower Connecticut River, The Gateway Commission’s Mission,” which presents the rationale behind the new Gateway Standards.

Current members from Essex include Edward Marlowe and Fred Vollono.

The Gateway Commission is staffed by planners from the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency.

Linda Krause

Connecticut River Museum

The Connecticut River Museum celebrated its 30th Anniversary in 2004 with a series of special events including a public birthday party picnic on the dockside green in August. For the past thirty years the Museum has offered varied programs for the River Valley communities in the form of exhibitions, lectures, in-school, onsite, and on-the- water education programs, summer workshops, volunteer opportunities and a host of special events that also serve to support the institution.

In January the Museum dedicated the new third floor Scott Gallery that added much needed exhibit space to this growing institution. The new public space was enabled by a grant from the Homeland Foundation that funded new sprinklers and an interior fire escape. The gallery debuted with a collection of prints from the corporate holdings of A.G. Edwards and was followed by contemporary paintings from the American Society of Marine Artists. A summer photography exhibition, ***Double Exposure: The Changing View, The Changing Vision*** contrasted images from the Museum’s Dahlstrom Collection with contemporary views of the same site. The show, funded by the Middlesex Community Foundation, was supported by a Connecticut River Forum on historic preservation entitled, ***Shaping the Future***. The Connecticut Humanities Council funded the summer exhibit, ***Fenwick -on-the-Sound: From Public Playground to Private Borough***.

Farming in the Valley during the 19th century was investigated in the exhibit, ***NeapTide, Hunter Moon: Marking the Seasons Along the Connecticut***. The Museum will mark the holiday season with the annual train show designed by artist Steve Cryan.

The Connecticut River Museum’s school programs were enhanced this year by grants that provided bus scholarships for under-served schools. In addition to the school programs, the Museum served almost 100 young people during Summer Workshops that included water-based programs aboard ***RiverQuest*** and archaeology on Nott Island.

In 2004 the Museum was selected as the local community project by Essex Rotary Club to celebrate the Centennial of Rotary International with an outdoor lighting of this historic landmark.

The Connecticut River Museum, a 501(c)3 educational institution, is open year-round in the historic Essex Steamboat Dock on the town waterfront. The Museum is supported by more than 1,000 members, businesses members and corporate sponsors. Membership is open to all.

Essex Art Association

The members of the Essex Art Association continue to be proud of our tradition of displaying an eclectic collection of quality works of art in a beautiful, historic, professional setting. We have been able to provide our members and the community with a well-run gallery that can welcome many different levels of

proficiency through the varied structure of our season. Some shows accept submissions from the general public and others are open only to the very expert Elected Artist members. Our season continues to run from mid April through mid September. We are closed in the colder months as our antique building is not heated. We have been able, through the dedicated help of our wonderful volunteers, to keep the gallery open every show day from 1-5 PM. Each of our six shows has a Fri. night opening party which is well attended and enjoyed by members and friends alike. All of our shows offer cash and other prize awards.

Our dedicated show chairs, receivers, and hangers have been able to accommodate an incredible variety of art work. We have been amazed and pleased at the aesthetic results they have produced. Each of our shows has a theme and a changing character. We continue to show cutting edge work as well as the more traditional. Our reputation is growing and we are happy to offer the community of artists as well as the general public a place to sell, buy, discuss and enjoy fine work. The gallery is a place to meet fellow artists and art lovers to discuss art work and careers in art and to share the work and creativity of making a great display and making a quality gallery run. We have a great time and we enthusiastically invite you to share the fun with us. Come in and see our gallery and talk to us. For more information, call our new Administrative Directors, Iris and Rick Silberberg, at the gallery at 767 8996.

Iris Silberberg, Co-director

Essex Community Fund

The Essex Community Fund has been serving our community since the 1940's and we continue the tradition of soliciting your support for non-profit agencies which provide important services to the residents of Essex, Centerbrook and Ivoryton. The Board of Governors is comprised of volunteers from all three villages: Tammy Lefoll, President; Daniel Kottke, Vice President; Corrine Moriarity, Treasurer; Deborah Swaney, Secretary; Selene Sweck, Walter Lynn, Lynne Beetz, Krista Karch, Leigh Morant.

In 2003 we allocated \$34,000 to the following agencies: The American Red Cross, Ancient Order of Essex Weeders, Bikes For Kids, Bushy Hill Nature Center, Camp Hazen – YMCA, Child & Family Services, The Clubhouse, Community Music School, Connecticut River Museum, Domestic Violence, Essex Art Association, Essex Boy Scout Troop 12, Essex Cub Scout Troop 4, Essex Elementary School Camperships, Essex Historical Society, Essex Housing Authority, Essex Land Conservation Trust, Essex Library Association, Estuary Council, FISH, Gilead Community Services, Ivoryton Library, Ivoryton Playhouse, Literacy Volunteers, Nutmeg Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Paul & Lisa, Region 4 Early Childhood Council, Rushford, Safe Graduation Committee, Salvation Army, Shoreline Soup Kitchens, Tri-Town Youth Services, Town Clergy Emergency Relief Fund, and Westbrook YMCA, Project Citizen.

As an example, Tri-Town Youth Services will supplement all of their youth programs as well as parent education and counseling with the funds awarded to them. Your generous donations provided almost all the cable service for the senior and disabled residents at Essex Court. This contribution greatly improves the quality of their lives.

The Board of Governors is very grateful and wishes to thank all individual donors, retailers, professionals, and industries for their support.

Tammy LeFoll, President

Essex Garden Club

The Essex Garden Club is in its 52nd year and continues to work for the goals of stimulating interest in civic beautification, aiding in the conservation of natural resources, and furthering the knowledge of artistic use of plant materials. Our Club belongs to the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, The Southeast Council of Garden Clubs, and the National Council of State Garden Clubs. We have sixty active members, twenty associate members, and ten sustaining members. Our members work tirelessly for the benefit of Essex.

May Market, our major fundraising event, has been growing and improving since the inception of the Club. This colorful, daylong fair, held on the Saturday before Mother's Day, provides the majority of funding for our activities. This year's event was blessed with a warm, sunny day and was well attended by our citizens and many visitors.

The Civic Improvement Committee works with the Town Crew, Parks and Recreation, The Tree Committee, The Ancient Order of Weeders, The Essex Merchants, Town Hall custodians, The Centerbrook Islanders and Ivoryton Weeders to beautify our Town. Crews from our Club routinely work in Town Park, Dickinson Park, Town Hall, and in several traffic islands to plant, weed, and nurture these areas. This year we donated funding to The Centerbrook Islanders for the redesign of the two traffic islands in Centerbrook.

We have partnered with the Tree Committee to add shade trees to this project, which will be planted in the fall. Civic Improvement also provides hundreds of geraniums throughout our Town and decorates merchant windowboxes with greens and berries during the holiday season.

The Garden Club continues the tradition begun in 1987 of providing scholarships for local college students studying in fields related to the environment. This year we were able to help three, well qualified applicants with \$4000 worth of funding. We also donated scholarships to three children to attend Bushy Hill summer camp.

Our members take turns supplying fresh flower arrangements to the Essex Library each week. This year we purchased a record number of books on gardening, flower arranging, and environmental concerns for the use of all interested patrons.

The Essex Garden Club continues to support the Essex Land Conservation Trust and many other non-profit programs which share our goals. Many thanks to the citizens of Essex for your continued support.

Daphne Nielsen, President

Essex Historical Society

The Essex Historical Society is committed to promoting an interest in the history of Essex through education, acquisition, preservation, and exhibits. During this past year, the EHS board defined and agreed upon three additional priorities for the near term. These include the preservation of historical structures, raising the society's community visibility, and expanding our collections. Most of you would probably agree that one of the most charming features of Essex is our collection of wonderful antique homes. The society feels that they have a responsibility to the community to participate in keeping these homes from being torn down or to at least document their existence in the event of demolition. The society is working with town officials to create a town ordinance that will help us achieve this goal. In addition, it is our hope that over the coming years we succeed at raising the visibility of the society. Hopefully, the increase in visibility will lead to success in our third near term goal: expanding our collections. I think you would agree that Essex Historical Society has the primary responsibility to acquire, collect, and preserve items of our past that will help tell the story of Essex for future generations. We take this responsibility seriously and have made a tremendous effort (over 1000 volunteer hours) in archiving and cataloging all items in our collection. We are hoping that by this diligence we may spur members of our community to think of donating to the Historical Society as they disburse items of Essex history.

Not only are we working hard at success with our three near term goals, but we are also continuing to do the activities that you are probably most familiar with. We continue our program of monthly evening lectures at the town hall. Every Saturday and Sunday this past summer our Docents dutifully gave tours of the Pratt House to local and out of town guests. We completed all major renovations at our second property, Hills Academy. We held a number of fund raising events this past year including a full day event that included historical information and tours of antique homes on Main Street in the village. We had a special night at the Ivoryton Playhouse with a celebration of 1940's music. And lastly we held a wonderful party and tour of the Dickinson mansion on North Main Street.

The society remains fiscally strong and our appreciation goes to all those who support our cause with their pocketbooks and/or valuable time. We invite everyone with an interest in Essex's history and preservation to join us. Membership and your involvement is a great way to meet new friends, and contribute with the volunteer spirit that makes this town number one!

Frank J. Flores, President

Estuary Council Of Senior Clubs, INC

The Estuary Council of Seniors, Inc. (ECSI) works with and serves people 55 years of age and older. Our mission is to maximize the independence, dignity and quality of life for all seniors in the region.

The in-kind volunteer hours are enormous; most of our services and programs would not be possible without the 200 plus regular volunteers. The Estuary Board of Director member representing Essex is Walter Miller.

Essex residents use of services and programs - July 1,2003 to June

2994 Meals at the Senior Center Café (106 Individuals)

4407 Homebound meals (Meals on Wheels – 28 Individuals)

1974 Dial-A-Ride transportation (93 Individuals)

329 EMOTS (19 Individuals)

232 Newsletter *Gazette* (Mailing list was updated in fall of 2003)

30 Support services – counseling and benefits (18 Individuals)
103 Preventative Health education and Health screens
1452 Recreational, Education and Exercise activities (113 Individuals)
79 Entertainment Programs, Tax Assistance, Mature Drivers, and other services/activities (45 Individuals)

Seniors are welcome to meals, programs and services at the Senior Center in Old Saybrook, as well as the cafés in Deep River, Lyme, Clinton or Westbrook. We are open to the public and encourage seniors to bring family and friends to meals and activities.

The Senior Center in Old Saybrook offers lunch five days a week at noon and made-to-order breakfast Monday through Saturday. Our Dial-A-Ride vans, and medical transportation beyond the Estuary region (EMOTS), are available Monday through Friday. We offer recreational and shopping trips, dinners and entertainment, computer and art courses. Bocce and horseshoe games, golf outings, pool players' tournaments, mahjong, chess and card games are regularly scheduled. We provide a medical loan closet (walkers, wheelchairs, toilet seats, canes, etc.), nutritional counseling, preventative health programs, individual screening by registered nurses, a variety of support groups, and weekly exercise and dance classes.

We sincerely appreciate the funds residents of the town of Essex allocate annually to ECSI.

Mitzi N. Eilts, Executive Director

Estuary Transit District

The Estuary Transit District was established in 1981 to provide public transportation programs within the Estuary region which includes the towns of Chester, Clinton, Deep River, Essex, Killingworth, Lyme, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook and Westbrook. Last year the Estuary's public transportation programs provided over 47,000 trips. Currently services are operated under contract by DATTCO under the new name **9 Town Transit**.

The **9 Town Transit** service is public transportation and available for all residents to use the routes include:

The Shoreline Shuttle Route runs Monday through Saturday along route 1 between Old Saybrook and Madison and the fare is \$1.10. The service does offer off-route stops between I-95 and the shoreline for \$2.20 by calling **510-0429** and reserving the stop.

The Public Bus Route is a "personalized" transportation program available in all the nine towns in the region. While service is limited, trips may be scheduled 5 days a week and the fare is \$1.10. Call **510-0429** for reservations.

In August of this year The Estuary Transit District (ETD) announced plans for a new bus route to provide service between Old Saybrook and Old Lyme. The new bus route will operate Monday through Friday between the hours of 10:00 AM and 2:30 PM. The fare for this service is \$1.10. The service does off-route stops for \$2.20. Call **510-0429** for schedules and route information. Initially the new route will operate as a pilot project with limited hours in order to gauge community support for this service.

As the number of residents who need our services continues to grow, the Estuary Transit District will continue its work to improve the public transportation alternatives for the region.

If you have any questions about the Estuary Transit District or the services it provides, please call this office (860) 395-0891.

James Rode, Administrator

Fire Department

The fiscal year 2003-2004 has been another busy year for our volunteers. We responded to 805 emergency calls. The majority of our responses were medicals, totaling 550 calls. 131 were automatic fire alarms, some of which were false alarms and system malfunctions, 50 were motor vehicle accidents, 20 were hazardous materials incidents, which included carbon monoxide detector investigations. The balance of calls were 18 good intent/smoke investigations, 9 vehicle fires, 7 public service, 6 wires down, and 1 mutual aid standby to a neighboring town.

In addition to emergency responses, our volunteers attend weekly work details, monthly training and meetings, mutual aid training with surrounding towns, State Certified firefighter training, State Certified Medical training, as well as hazardous materials training. Anyone wishing to join our volunteer organization, please feel free to stop by on Wednesday nights and speak with an officer.

The fire department wishes to pay its final respect to exempt member Robert Spring, Jr.

Remember, to report an emergency, dial 911 and give complete information on the type and location of the emergency.

We would like to thank the townspeople as well as all government officials who have assisted us with our endeavors throughout the fiscal year.

We look forward to serving the community during the upcoming year.

Keith C. Nolin, Chief

Ivoryton Playhouse

The Ivoryton Playhouse is unique, both as a building and as a business. It was built in 1911 as a community hall for the workers of the Comstock-Cheney factory and as such it has always held a special place in the hearts of the residents of Ivoryton. In 1938, the hall was bought by Milton Stiefel and renamed the Ivoryton Playhouse and America's first self sustaining summer playhouse was born. Since that time literally hundreds of the major theatrical figures of the era have trod the boards at the Playhouse.

Today, the Ivoryton Playhouse is owned by the Ivoryton Playhouse Foundation, Inc., a Connecticut non-stock corporation with Section 501 (c) (3) status. It is managed by a board of Trustees and employs an executive director, a production designer and an office administrator and box office staff. The annual revenue of approximately \$160,000.00 is generated through a combination of membership dues, rental income, benefit performances and sponsorships.

The past couple of years have seen great changes for the Playhouse, not only in the renovated and refurbished physical structure but also in the uses of the building. What was once a largely summer stock theatre with various community events throughout the year has become a thriving year-round theatre with a summer and winter season. This year's season includes *Smokey Joe's Café* – the music of Leiber & Stoller- September 30 – October 17, 2004; *Inherit the Wind* by Jerome Lawrence & Robert E. Lee – November 4 – 21, 2004; *Amadeus* by Peter Shaffer – March 3 – 20, 2005; *Big River* by Roger Miller & William Hauptman – March 31 – April 17, 2005; *Blithe Spirit* by Noel Coward - May 5 – 22, 2005.

Of course, some of our favorite events will be coming back this year: Connecticut Gay Men's Chorus –

September 19th; our wild and crazy Halloween Dance – October 30th; our ever popular family holiday

musical (*The King and I*) – December 3rd – 19th and other community events throughout the year.

Come and join us for an exciting Winter Season at the Ivoryton Playhouse – we're the great little theatre in your own backyard!

Jacqueline Hubbard, Executive Director

Land Trust

The Essex Land Conservation Trust this year added a new preserve, a beautiful four-acre wooded valley generously donated in December 2003 by Jane and Dr. Ray James of Essex. Its name, "James Glen," is particularly appropriate because Dr. James' father, who helped him acquire the land, was named Glen James.

For the third year, the land trust worked with property owners and Friends of Mill Pond to control invasive plants in the Falls River/Mill Pond. These aquatic plants were growing out of control in the Falls River/Mill Pond. The land trust once again thanks Ed Marlowe for his hard work coordinating this project, and the many neighbors of the pond who made contributions toward this year's treatment.

The land trust installed a second nesting platform for osprey on its Thatchbed Island property in South Cove. Land Trust Board Members Paul Greenberg and Alan Macgregor, along with Jim Morgan of Lyme, erected the platform according to DEP specifications, and with a DEP permit. Ozzie and Harriet, the osprey pair who occupied the first platform last year, have returned to it.

The land trust also hosted eight field trips last summer – some by land, some by canoe and kayak, all led by naturalist Phil Miller.

In addition, the land trust held volunteer work days at its Cross Lots, Falls River, James Glenn, Thatchbed Island and Windswept Ridge Preserves. This is the second year for the Thatchbed Island work party, which requires ferrying workers to and from the island. Last year, 33 volunteers worked for four hours and removed from the island 132 tires and enough styrofoam and other debris to fill two dumpsters.

The Essex Land Conservation Trust is eager to have members and volunteers. For more information, please visit our website, essexlandtrust.org, email us at essexlandtrust@comcast.net, write us at P.O. Box 373, Essex Connecticut 06426, or call Land Trust President John Matthiessen at 767-1222.

Bill Reichenbach, Vice President

Lions Club

The Essex Lions Club has served the Town of Essex for over 50 years. During the past year, the Club made substantial donations to the Essex and Ivoryton Libraries, the Essex Fire Department, and the Ambulance Association. The Club also contributed to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen and the Tri-town Youth Service Bureau. Keeping with the Lions Club's support of vision-related organizations, contributions were made to the CT Lion's Eye Research Center, Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation, and the CT Low Vision Center. The Club also paid for eye exams and eyeglasses for Essex residents who could not afford them. Additional Community Services included participation in the Ivoryton Pumpkin Festival, the Run for Children, and assisted the Valley Regional High School Special Ed students with a senior trip fundraising car wash.

The Essex Lions Club is able to make these contributions and provide these services because of the generous support of Essex citizens. This past year, the Club held three major fundraisers. The always popular Lions Lobster Bake was held on the first Saturday of August; the Club operated a concession stand at the Valley Railroad when Thomas the Tank Engine paid a visit; and, finally, there was an excellent response to the Essex Lions Eye Research letter. The Club looks forward to another year of service and thanks the Town of Essex for its support.

John Bogaert, President

Essex Library Association

The Essex Library is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. Only 30% of our operating income came from the Town of Essex in FY2004. We rely on donations to the Annual Membership Campaign, income from an endowment and donations from the Friends of the Library (an independent library support organization) for the remainder of our annual operating funds.

We are a free public library and serve all three villages of Essex. Borrowers can browse and select from our collection of over 22,000 books and 4,000 non-print materials such as books on tape and compact disc, video cassettes, DVD's, large print books, music CD's, magazines and online reference resources. We also offer services such as interlibrary loan, reference assistance and quality educational programming for adults and children. Ongoing programs include monthly lectures, music, and author book signings, Essex Reads – a town wide one-book project each April, Friday Family Night specials, Book-A-Baby welcome kits, book discussion groups, a monthly technology seminars, Summer Reading Program, Laura Griswold Memorial Concert, and our popular "Essex and the Sea" sailing series.

Attendance at programs and use of the collections has continued to increase at a staggering pace in the past 5 years. And yet because of severe space constraints books and other materials must be continually removed from the collection that would otherwise be retained. Programs, when held in the library, prevent visitors from using the children's room and finding books. There is no quiet spot to read, reflect or study. Faced with these challenges, a long range planning committee determined in 2001 that a larger building is necessary to provide for the needs of the community.

The Capital Campaign Committee has been working tirelessly to raise the funds necessary to ensure the successful completion of this exciting project. The expansion plans are displayed at the Library for anyone interested in further details. A public kick-off to the Capital Campaign, "The Next Chapter," is anticipated in the fall of 2005.

Hours: Tuesday-Thursday 10-8; Friday and Saturday 10-5; Sunday 1-4. Closed Mondays. Phone: 860-767-1560. Library staff: Anita Amos, Cathy Burgard, Judie McCann, Elizabeth Nash, Bridget Quinn-Carey (Director), and Ann Thompson.

Board of Trustees 2004-2005: Alison Brinkmann, Edward Castner (President), William Chatman, Stephanie Degen-Monroe, Barry Fulford, Henry Greenleaf, John Heiser, Shirley Malcarne, Alison Smith Marcinek, Daniel Nesbett, George Penniman, Terry Smith, and Jerome Wilson.

Bridget Quinn-Carey, Director

Ivoryton Library Association

This year has been one of great change and activity at the Ivoryton Library. At their May 2004 meeting, the Board of Directors decided to extend the open hours of the library by over 50%. As a result, the new hours at the Ivoryton Library are Monday 10-6, Tuesday 10-6, Wednesday 10-8, Thursday 10-6, Friday 2-5, Saturday 10-1, Sunday 2-5. We hope this will make it easier for all library patrons to use our services.

The Essex and Ivoryton Libraries recently combined to conduct a series of computer classes downstairs in the Ivoryton Library computer lab. Other series offered were "Women Who Invest," "Women Who Read," and "Celebrate Fairy Tales."

The Ivoryton Library published a third book, *Houses of Essex*. All work on this book, from writing to the actual printing, was done by members of the community. Bill Nelson and Robbi Storms did the graphic layout, Sherry Clark, Leslie Barlow, and Paul Barrett did the contemporary photography, and Essex Printing Co. did the printing. The library received a grant and local donations in the amount of \$13,000 for the photography project *Images of Essex*. The photographs will be exhibited at the Essex Art Association this coming April.

Many thanks to director Robbi Storms and her staff, Jean Johnson, Elizabeth Alvord, Rosalie Zonder, Elizabeth Sprague and Kathryn Ryan. Don Malcarne remains Board President, Brenda Milkofsky is Vice President, Ken Kells, Treasurer, and Fran Nolin is Secretary. Retiring Board members Nancy Garlinghouse, Kristin Carufe, Judy Macauley, and Jaime Shane depart with a well-deserved "thank you" for their service.

Don Malcarne, President

Literacy Volunteers

Literacy Volunteers - Valley Shore, CT trains volunteer tutors to teach Basic Reading and English as a Second Language to residents of the Valley Shore area who cannot read, write or speak English, or who would like to improve these basic skills. This one-to-one instruction is held confidential and is completely without charge to the student.

In 2003 from the town of Essex, we had 33 volunteers - 3 of these (Erling Nord, Robert Karr and John Pacelle) were Board members and 3 (Wanda Castner, Mona West and Dot Nord) were volunteer Staff members. Serving on our Book Sale Committee from Essex were Grace Rowe, Hazel Schulte and Dianne Monahan. Our total number of volunteers for 2003 was 251.

Our total number of students in 2003 was 291, 18 of these resided in Essex. Our tutoring hours for 2003 were 6,874. Tutors spent 2,412 hours preparing for lessons. In addition, our volunteers gave 4,020 hours in administrative time to help make our program successful. We do tutor students at Valley Regional and at John Winthrop but we do not register them by town. Our students represented 65 different countries. In addition to our normal tutoring programs, we had 2 special programs in Essex.

Mary Ellen Jewett, Executive Director

Museum of Fife & Drum

The Museum of Fife & Drum is situated on two plus acres in Ivoryton on the corner of Highland Terrace and North Main (Rte. 80). It is home to one of the most unique collections of artifacts in the world; it is a visual and musical history of America on parade, from the Revolutionary War to the present. Theme displays feature drums, fifes, military swords, music, uniforms, medals, awards and photographs.

We are sponsored by The Company of Fifers & Drummers, Inc., an international service organization, which also maintains a library of field music and administrative offices adjacent to the museum. The Company of Fifers & Drummers coordinates the activities of more than 150 traditional fife and drum corps throughout the U.S., Canada, and parts of Europe.

In addition, the Company sponsors free summer concerts at the Museum on Tuesday evenings during July and August. Jaybird Day, held at the building on the first Saturday in October, is a time when drum corps members 60 years old and older gather and play their fifes and drums and enjoy a day of food, fellowship and reminiscing.

For information regarding membership or upcoming events, write to P.O. Box 277, Ivoryton, CT 06442.

PTO (Parents and Teachers Organization)

The Mission Statement of the EES-PTO is as follows: Through the partnership of parents, children and educators, the Parent Teacher Organization is dedicated to enriching the lives of Essex Elementary students.

Cultural Arts at EES is a series of creative performances including poetry, opera, puppetry, dance, music, and more.

The PTO offers an after-school program for students in grades K-6. The program runs for several weeks in the fall and spring. Program offerings include art, music, sports, computers, science, crafts, and cooking.

Any volunteer who would like to provide an activity or become involved in this committee should contact the PTO President.

October hosts two exciting PTO events – our annual Harvest Festival, and a 3-day Book Fair. The Harvest Festival is an annual family fun day filled with games, activities, the famous “kakewalk” (donated cakes are awarded to the winners of this all-time favorite game), and an auction of donated gifts as well as food and fun for all. The Book Fair features children’s and adult books for sale. A children’s author and/or illustrator typically anchors this event with a book-signing/reading appearance. The emphasis of the Book Fair is to encourage reading.

Family Night is a fun family gathering of the EES community to celebrate the spring season with dinner and family entertainment.

The PTO welcomes financial contributions for its many enrichment programs. Families not wishing to participate in a fund-raising activity or event may make a monetary contribution directly to the PTO.

New families joining the EES community are invited to become involved with PTO happenings by attending PTO meetings. PTO meetings are usually held the first Tuesday of the month September through May, excluding December.

*Karen Burzin,
PTO President*

Rotary Club

Rotary is a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders that provides humanitarian service, encourages ethical business practices, and promotes international understanding. 1.2 million Rotarians belong to more than 31,000 Rotary clubs worldwide. The Essex Rotary Club, chartered on October 3rd, 1955, has striven for nearly fifty years to improve the quality of life in our community and in the world beyond. The organization’s dedication to this ideal is expressed in its motto, Service Above Self. Attorney Paul P. Harris organized the first club in Chicago on February 23, 1905. The name *Rotary* derived from the practice of rotating meetings among members’ offices.

Rotary has committed to immunizing all of the world’s children against polio. Rotary is the largest private-sector contributor to global polio eradication. Rotarian volunteers have immunized more than one billion children. Rotary is also working to meet the changing needs of society, expanding efforts to address such issues as environmental degradation, illiteracy, and world hunger.

Signature events of the Essex Rotary include the traditional Shad and Bluefish bakes in June and September respectively. Other special events include the “Eagle Eye” Jazz Festival in February and the Golf Tournament in June. Proceeds fund the community service activities of the club, as well as the club’s scholarship program. Rotarians also volunteer numerous hours to other civic projects in the community. In February 2005 Rotary will celebrate its centennial. Essex Rotary will sponsor a Centennial Project in cooperation with the Connecticut River Museum to mark the occasion.

The Essex Rotary Club meets each Tuesday evening at 6:15 PM at the Essex Yacht Club. If you are interested in opportunities for community involvement and good fellowship, and wish to learn more, consider joining us as a guest. Please call me at 767-2139.

John D. Monahan, President

Boy Scouts

Essex Boy Scouts, Troop 12, is a chartered unit under the Boy Scouts of America Connecticut Rivers Council, Middlesex District. The Essex Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) charts Troop 12 annually providing outstanding support with funds, facilities and mentor-ship. Troop 12 currently has 43 scouts registered, with 12 adult leaders. The following information summarizes some of last year’s major activities.

Scouts are challenged to do a good turn daily, and as a Troop, the scouts helped clean up Knott Island, and landscape the VFW hall. These service projects were accomplished collectively, but the scouts and patrols have worked in the community at large and continue to seek service project opportunities. During this period, two Boy Scouts in the senior patrol completed their Eagle project and earned their Eagle, the highest rank held. Congratulations to Ryan Welch of Centerbrook, and Dan Spencer of Westbrook for their hard work in achieving scoutings’ highest rank.

This past year Troop 12 accepted 11 WEBLO Cub Scouts from Essex Pack 4. These Cubs were crossed over to Boy Scouting after they received their arrow of light award, the only Cub Scout award allowed for

display on the Boy Scout Uniform. The new Scouts joined the older Scouts in a campout where they worked on some basic scouting skills, fire starting, safety, food preparation and basic camping. Some of the troops older Scouts age 14 and above, along with four adult leaders attended a week-long camping excursion at the Double "H" ranch in New Mexico. The high adventure camping trip included several miles of hiking each day, along with water purification and navigational skills. The trip was truly challenging, but all agreed this high adventure was well worth the effort.

The troop held its annual rummage/tag sale in an effort to raise funds. Additionally, 19 scouts and three adult leaders spent a week at Camp Mattatuck, in Plymouth CT. During summer camp the boys learned swimming, boating, archery, and rifle shooting skills. For the first time in many years, Troop 12 held Order of the Arrow elections. Four Scouts and one Leader were elected and attended a weekend training, successfully completing their ordeal and earning their Order of the Arrow sash.

The future looks bright as Troop 12 prepares for Autumn and Winter camping trips. As in the past, we are preparing to offer this year's Holiday Ornament of the Connecticut River Museum. Look for a scout in your neighborhood to place your order.

Adults or boys interested in joining Troop 12 should contact the Committee Chairman Jim Guerrero at 767-3371.

Cub Scouts

Essex Cub Scouts Pack 4 has been serving boys in our community for the past 48 years. Essex Cub Scouts of Pack 4 presently have 63 scouts. The scouts have gathered clothing for the Warm the Children campaign, provided food, served, and cleaned up for the Shoreline Soup Kitchen. The Scouts learn a sense of responsibility to their community and to be charitable and kind to those in need. We are preparing our scouts to move into Boy Scouts through five steps. The steps start as Tiger Cubs to Wolves, then Bears, and finally into Webelos, an 18 month commitment until they cross over to Boy Scouting.

Our Cub Scouts understand the outdoor ethics of "Leave No Trace" and the importance of recycling.

Through Cub Scouting they perform a service to the community and understand how to better themselves to become example citizens of the United States. The program is designed to be a complete family event. Scouts with parental assistance learn a variety of age appropriate skills in sports, first aid, arts and crafts, music, and drawing, and are instilled with an appreciation for the outdoors as they earn their advancement ranks. The Cubs also go on several trips to sporting events, camp outs, picnics, parades, museums, and meet other scouts from throughout Connecticut at officially sponsored District events.

We thank all citizens of Essex for supporting our bottle drives each month and our charter sponsor, The Rotary Club of Essex.

We meet every third Thursday night of the month in the Town Hall.

Michael Dean, Cubmaster Pack 4

Girl Scouts

Essex Girl Scouts celebrated Juliette Low's birthday with a Bingo Night hosted by Troop 2012. "Birthday bags" were collected as "admission" and donated to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen. Later in March, the Scouts reflected on their international connection to Scouts by celebrating Thinking Day with a day of games and crafts sponsored by Troop 2754. Girls attended the annual Service Unit Spring Camporee from April 30 - May 2 at the Chester Fairgrounds. The "Survivor" theme was reinforced with team-building activities and cooperative games.

The girls performed many community service and fun projects. They created Christmas cards for servicemen, worked at the Soup Kitchen Distribution Center and donated newspapers to Guiding Eyes puppy raisers. Cadette Troop 2012 is planning and saving for a 2005 trip to the Girl Scout World Center in Mexico.

The year-end Court of Awards ceremony was held on June 2 at the Essex Elementary School. Here, the girls received all the badges, patches and religious recognitions they earned throughout the year and if applicable, bridged to the next level of scouting. At the High Tea in June, Essex Senior Girl Scout Kyra Elliott was presented with the highest award in Girl Scouting, the Gold Award. For her Gold Award project, Kyra researched the symptoms and treatment of anaphylaxis as they relate to insect stings and presented her findings through a Power Point presentation at the Essex Library. She also developed an informational brochure which is available in many local doctors' offices.

In addition to being an excellent opportunity for girls, Girl Scouting offers equally rewarding experiences for adult volunteers. Monthly meetings for leaders and volunteers were held at the Deep River Elementary

School. A special dinner was held on April 15 to recognize our troop leaders and volunteers for their contribution of time in support of all our girls. Additional adult volunteers (male and female) are always needed. Community adults with a special skill, knowledge or interesting career are encouraged to share them with our girls.

Sarah J. Pike

Tri-Town Youth Services

Since Tri-Town Youth Services' establishment in 1984, the nonprofit has served youth (birth to 18) and their families who reside in Chester, Deep River, and Essex. The agency works with youth to strengthen connections with family, peers, school, and the community, carefully ensuring our services augment, not duplicate other programs. Counseling and crisis intervention were provided to residents for a wide range of issues through day and evening appointments with 24-hour phone availability. Issues addressed include eating disorders, depression, suicide ideation, sexual abuse, and substance abuse, with referrals made in some instances. Our early intervention program, the Tri-Town Juvenile Review Board hears cases of youth in trouble with the law as they are referred.

More of our work is directed to positive youth development, parent education, and building healthy families and communities. With the school social worker, we trained Peer Advocates at Valley Regional; facilitated two youth advisory boards, organized community service activities (such as growing vegetables for Shoreline Soup Kitchens and packing holiday baskets), facilitated several mentoring programs, offered supervised teen recreational activities, a youth job bank, babysitter training classes (one, CPR for teens), "More Than Sugar & Spice," Homework Hangout, a summer co-op for middle school youth, and involvement in Safe Grad. Parent programs included groups for parents/caregivers and their one-year-olds or two-year-olds and a workshop series, "Ages & Stages," and others. We sponsored the fifteenth annual substance abuse prevention/awareness week, "High on Life," successful due to support from multiple facets of the community.

The Bureau's Board of Directors is comprised of three to five members from each of the three towns and a youth representative. Our special thanks to: volunteers who have donated time and talent, to local taxpayers who support the bureau by providing the matching funds needed to procure our State Department of Education grant, and to all who have made monetary donations essential for maintaining our operating budget.

Gail M. Onofrio, Executive Director

Veterans Memorial Hall

We received \$7,000 from an anonymous Essex donor to replace the plastic and aluminum flag holders with bronze in the three cemeteries. The Daughters of the American Revolution, Essex Boy Scouts, Local Veteran, and the Essex Lions Club have offered to help with this project.

Shelly Parker has retired as president of the Essex Veterans Memorial Hall. Thank you for all the time and effort you and Anne have given to make the hall what it is today.

We are always accepting new members. Veterans desiring to join may do so by presenting a copy of their honorable discharge.

This year our annual pig roast was chaired by Kim Parker, club secretary. Proceeds will go to the Rocky Hill Veterans Home and Hospital. Please call 767-1096 if you have any questions at all.

Ernest Cook, Jr.

Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley

The Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley (VNLV), a nonprofit Centerbrook organization, has been serving the home health needs of the residents of Essex Township and the surrounding area for over 85 years.

Once again, we wish to extend our appreciation to our volunteer board of directors for their leadership and commitment: Dr. Sally Crawford, Judy Heiser, Hank Greenleaf and Wendy Connor from Essex, and Carl Manning, Arthur Henick, Peg Lieberman and Ted Heiser of Chester.

This past year, VNLV staff provided 17,504 visits to 200 Essex residents, ranging from homemaker and home health aide services to treatment provided by therapists and registered nurses. While the majority of this care was reimbursed by public and private payers, the Town of Essex contributed to the care of 57 individuals who were without sufficient health insurance to meet their needs for nursing services, medical supplies or medications. In addition to home visits, our nurses provided 1,200 flu shots, and monthly clinics for cholesterol and blood pressure screening.

VNLV has continued to experience greater demand for services; an additional 1,309 hours of care and treatment were provided to Essex residents, representing an 11.4% increase over last year. Given that our case load has remained the same, this demonstrates that our patients have more complex health needs. With increased longevity, and people choosing to remain at home, 26% of our patients are now between 86 and 105 years of age.

Volunteers Wanted!!! Volunteering can be one of the most rewarding experiences in life. VNLV is now recruiting volunteers for a new program targeting isolated seniors in need of transportation, light household assistance, and companionship. Giving of your time and talents can greatly improve our community and the lives of our friends and neighbors. Come make a difference with us.

Priscilla Munro, Executive Director